Boston Globe
Tuesday, March 29, 1977

Assassinations panel fighting for survival

United Press International

WASHINGTON — The House Assassination Committee today prepared its case for survival, proclaiming new-found unity among its members and fresh but uncorroborated information on the killings of John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr.

The House Rules Committee approved a resolution 9 to 4 yesterday to continue the panel for the rest of this Congress beyond its scheduled March 31 termination date. The House is expected to take it up tomorrow.

Earlier yesterday the committee issued its first report of the year, claiming "new leads" in the King killing and indications the Warren Commission was wrong in at least one aspect of its inquiry into the Kennedy murder.

The committee got into trouble in January when it asked for $13 million over two years — since scaled down to 5.6 million — and was further jeopardized when Rep. Henry Gonzalez (D-Tex.) resigned as its chairman after failing to get support from fellow members and, he charged, from the leadership in his effort to fire chief counsel Richard Sprague.

The committee also claimed several "new leads" indicating that Oswald was associated with CIA-supported anti-Castro groups as well as having connections with the CIA and FBI.

"The most important current development" in the King killing, said the report, is James Earl Ray's willingness to talk to the panel, which he did in interviews at the Brushy Mountain State Penitentiary in Tennessee last week and again yesterday. Ray is serving a 99-year sentence for the killing.

The report developed no new unpublished information and rules panel members ignored it while devoting nearly three hours to questioning Rep. Louis Stokes (D-Ohio), the new chairman, about the Gonzalez-Sprague dispute.

"I don't think this thing (reconstitution resolution) is going to fly on the floor mainly because of Mr. Sprague," said Rep. B. F. Sisk (D-Calif.). "This whole thing is a sham and a waste of money."